

TEXT OF TELEGRAM BOSEOUL 006242

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ADP374

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00  
ICAE-00 INRE-00 SY-05 SYE-00 HA-05 /060 W  
-----087613 160929Z /17

O 160857Z MAY 80  
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6353  
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
COMUSKOREA SEOUL KS//BJ-IS  
CHJUSMAG SEOUL KS  
SA CINCUNC KS

SEOUL 06242

E.O. 12065: GDS 5/16/80 (CLARK, WILLIAM) DR-P  
TAGS: PINS, KS  
SUBJECT: SEOUL SITREP, MAY 15-16: LARGE DEMOS ON 15TH,  
LULL ON 16TH, POSSIBLE RENEWAL OF ACTION ON 17TH

REF: SEUL 6184

1.

2. MAY 15TH MARKED THE SECOND DAY OF VERY LARGE STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS IN SEOUL, WITH AN ESTIMATED 40,000 TO 50,000 STUDENTS PARTICIPATING. RIOT POLICE, OUTNUMBERED ABOUT 3-3.5, SET LINES BY MID-AFTERNOON IN CENTER OF DOWNTOWN AT NAMDAEMUN, ANKUKTONG ROTARY, AND INDEPENDENCE GATE, AND HELD THESE SUCCESSFULLY TILL STUDENTS DISPERSED BETWEEN 30 AM) 11 P.M. STUDENTS TRIED TO PUSH BUT NOT FIGHT THEIR WAY THROUGH POLICE LINES, AND FROM AROUND 8 P.M. ON TRIED HIT-AND-RUN HARASSMENT, BUT DID NOT ATTAIN THEIR GOAL OF ENTERING KWANGHWAMUN (INNER DOWNTOWN AREA). EMBASSY AND RESIDENTIAL COMPOUNDS WERE NOT THREATENED.

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3. VIOLENCE: STUDENTS HAVE GENERALLY NOT GONE BEYOND SOME SHOVING AND ROCK-THROWING, WHILE POLICE HAVE RESPONDED WITH NON-LETHAL METHODS, INCLUDING TEAR GAS. STUDENT LEADERS HAVE EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN ABOUT ROUGH-NECK ELEMENTS BEING DRAWN INTO THE FRAY, AND HAVE REPORTEDLY ORDERED STUDENTS TO SEIZE ANYONE ENGAGING IN DANGEROUS BEHAVIOR. IN THE WORST INCIDENT MAY 15, A HI-JACKED CITY BUS WAS DRIVEN INTO A POLICE LINE, INJURING

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THREE OFFICERS AND KILLING ONE. ALL TOLD, THREE BUSES WERE COMMANDEERED AND IN ONE OF THE CASES STUDENTS REPORTEDLY APPREHENDED THE DRIVER, A 20-YEAR-OLD UNEMPLOYED YOUTH AND HANDED HIM OVER TO THE POLICE.

4. ARRESTS AND INJURIES: GOVT SOURCES REPORT 50 POLICE AND 25 STUDENTS SUSTAINED SERIOUS INJURY, AS NOTED ONE POLICEMAN WAS KILLED, AND 250 POLICE RECEIVED LIGHT INJURY. NO FIGURE FOR LIGHT STUDENT INJURIES AVAILABLE SINCE STUDENTS LEFT THE SCENE. POLICE REPORT ABOUT 250 ARRESTED AND SEEM TO BE RELEASING 90 TO 95 PERCENT OF THOSE ARRESTED WITHIN HOURS.

5. PROVINCES: TAEJU REPORTS ONLY SCATTERED INCIDENTS YESTERDAY, NO LARGE DEMONSTRATIONS, AND PUSAN REPORTS NO OFF-CAMPUS DEMONSTRATIONS. KWANGJU REPORTS DEMONSTRATIONS SMALLER THAN ON THE 13TH, WITH SOME BYSTANDERS ATTRACTED TO GOIN BY SHOUTS OF A NEW SLOGAN: "DOWN WITH KIM YOUNG-SAM".

6. STUDENT LEADERS IN SEOUL WERE REPORTEDLY IN CONTACT FROM LATE ON THE 15TH THROUGH A GOOD PART OF MAY 16. FIRST SENTIMENT SEEMED TO BE IN FAVOR OF SUSPENDING DEMONSTRATIONS UNTIL AFTER PRESIDENT CHOI'S RETURN AND

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HIS POLICY SPEECH WHICH THEY EXPECT ON THE 17TH. HOWEVER, STUDENTS DO CHANGE THEIR MINDS WITH EASE, AND IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER THE WEEKEND WILL BE CALM OR STORMY.

7. AS OF 1300 MAY 16TH, SEOUL TRAFFIC, CROWDS, ETC. APPEAR NORMAL. POLICE, ON ALERT, ARE IN EVIDENCE AROUND THE CITY.

8. NETWORK TV FOOTAGE SHOWN ON LOCAL MILITARY STATION, AND PRESUMABLY IN U.S., EXAGGERATES NOT THE SIZE, BUT THE INTENSITY OF THE LAST THREE DAYS' EVENTS.

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